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satin, or some other material, first stretched over a square frame fitted to shape, and fixed at the corner to the piano-back.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GILDING.

At the present time there is a great taste for gilding oak so as to show the grain of the wood. The directions given below for this work will apply equally to other kinds of gilding. Oil gilding only is used in decoration.

The surface must be carefully sized two or three times with good patent or parchment size, which can be had prepared for the purpose in a convenient form. This is to stop the suction. Plain oak requires more sizing than a painted surface, one coat carefully put on being sufficient for the latter. Each coat must be allowed to dry thoroughly before the next is applied. The size must be used hot, but not allowed to boil. Draw the brush across the grain of the wood. Use a flat camel brush in tin, about an inch in width, and always wash it after use. When the oak panel is quite dry, gold-size it with prepared oil gold size (sold in small pots). The gold size when not in use must be kept air-tight. Be sure to get it of good quality, as on this to a great extent depends the brilliancy of the gilding. When the parchment covering is removed from the pot, stir the contents well, and paint the surface very evenly and thinly with it, crossing it several times, so that the gold size may penetrate the interstices of the grain, but do not allow it to be sufficiently thick to stand in ridges. This must be avoided, or it will never dry properly, and the gold will be spoiled. The operation is best done in the latter part of the day, so as to give the size about twelve hours to dry. The following morning it will be found to have a slight "tackiness," but it must not be touched, except to test when it is dry enough, which will be ascertained by the fingers slightly adhering without taking off any of the size.

The panel is then ready to receive the gold. The necessary materials for gilding are books of gold leaf, a cushion or pad to lay and cut the gold upon, a gilder's tip to raise the gold with, a gilder's knife, some cotton wool to press the gold down with, a bottle of parchment size, and a mop.

Open the book of gold carefully, and blow out a few leaves (not more than will be required for immediate use) on to the screened part of the cushion, holding the cushion on the thumb of the left hand by the strap underneath. Then with the knife raise one leaf, and place it flat on the other part of the cushion, assisting with the breath. When it is flat the gold can be cut into convenient sizes by drawing the edge of the knife gently across it. Lift the pieces of gold by means of the tip, holding it between thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and laying the hairs flatly on the pieces. Occasionally draw the tip across your hair, so as to attract the gold more readily. Place the gold upon the surface to be gilded, letting each piece overlap slightly, then gently press the gold with the cotton wool, and brush off the superfluous dust with the mop. When this is done the gold should have a thin coat of parchment size passed over it to preserve its color. If you

cannot obtain parchment size, isinglass can be used instead. Gilding done in this manner will last a century, and if properly varnished, longer. Some amateurs employ real gold paper, with which they cover the panels, and, after having sized it, proceed to paint upon it.

AN ENGLISH ARTIST'S HOME.

THE superbly decorated home of Sir Frederick Leighton, President of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, has recently been finished, and is now the talk of artistic London. The greater part of the first floor is devoted to the appointments of the studio, and the chief or garden elevation of the house is governed by its requirements. No care seems to have been spared in provid-

ney-pieces are marble, inlaid in geometrical design, and the cabinets at the east end, in front of the gallery, are from designs of the architect. The heating of the room is by three open fireplaces, and the blinds of the large window are of dense canvas (of the same color as the walls).

The already famous "Arab Hall" was built as an adjunct to the house for the purpose of exhibiting on its wall Sir Frederick's large collection of old tiles from Cairo and Constantinople, and Eastern woodwork, as well as some stained-glass windows from Damascus. The interior is finished with marble, gold mosaic, painting and gilding harmoniously combined in the true spirit of Arab magnificence. The capitals of the marble shafts are from Mr. Aitchison's designs, and were modelled by Mr. Boehm. The large gilt caps were by Mr. Caldecott, and the frieze of gold mosaic is from designs by Mr. Walter Crane.

The drawing-room was designed for the exhibition of four fine panels of "Morning," "Evening," "Noon," and "Night," and of a circular sketch by De la Croix in the ceiling. The chimney-pieces, cabinets, some of the chairs and bookcases, were specially designed for this room by the architect to the house, who also designed the large sideboard and hooded mantelpiece in the dining-room.

The chief material, both for the Arab Hall and house, is red brick for the walls, with red tiles for the roof. A large garden extends to the back of the house and to the rear of Mr. Marcus Stone's house and grounds in the Melbury Road, and it adjoins the plot occupied by Mr. Val. Prinsep, A.R.A.

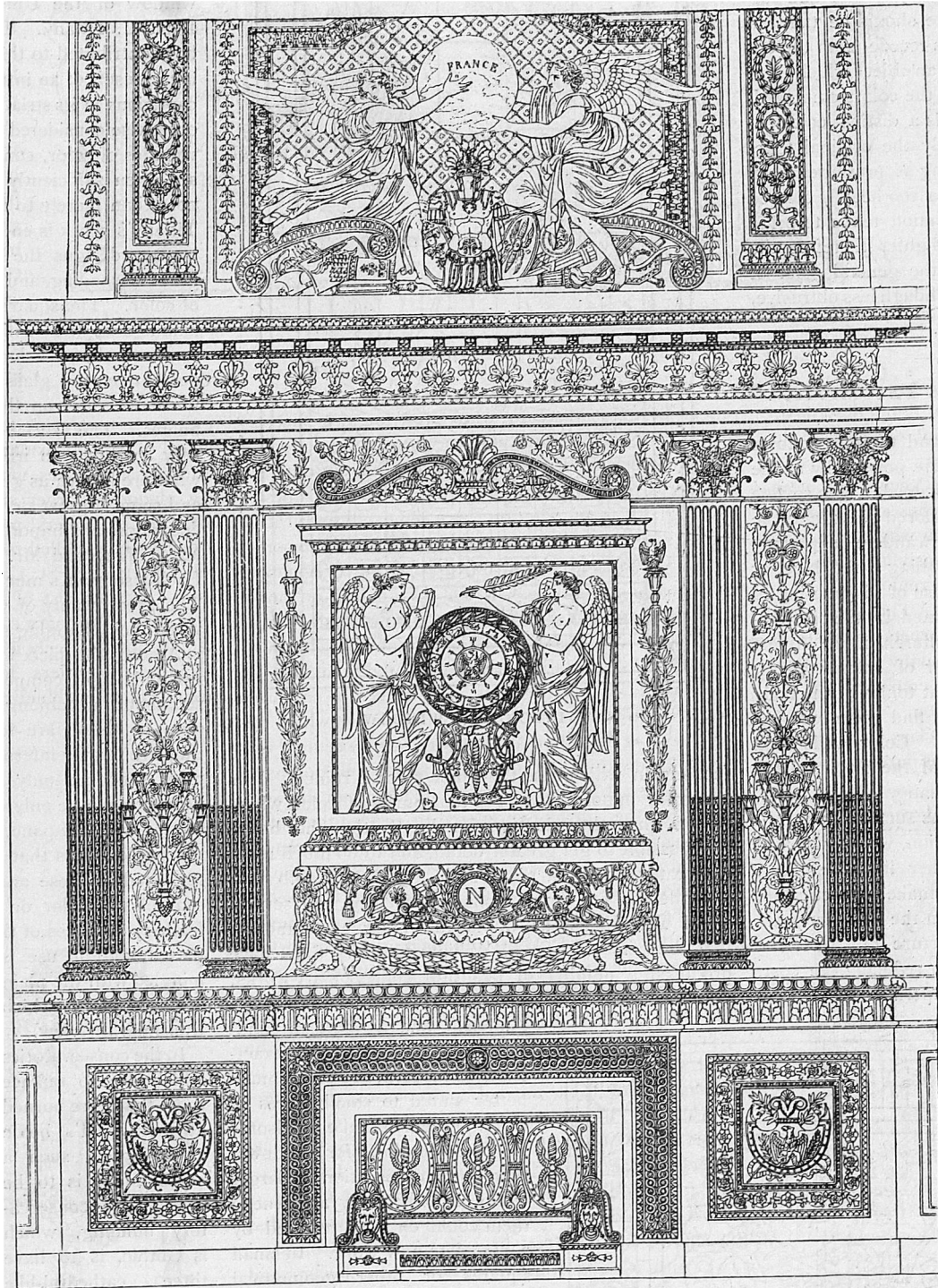
COLOR IN INTERIOR DECORATION.

To the practical decorator nothing is more important than a keen appreciation of color; yet in how many instances do we see that consideration set aside, and otherwise good work marred by an injudicious arrangement of tints. It is usually the case that after the wall-paper of a room has been chosen the painter devotes a great deal of time to the attempt to match the color of the paper for the purpose of painting the woodwork of the room in a corresponding tint to the walls. Such a course is entirely unnecessary. The true artist, instead of matching the paper, would at once ascertain the most appropriate contrasting color, as in the harmony of contrast lies the true talisman of successful decoration.

The following table of direct contrasts is a useful one to remember. It has already been given in these columns, but questions so often come to us from correspondents, showing that they do not know its value, that we publish it once more for their benefit:

BLUE	contrasts with	ORANGE.
Blue green	"	red orange.
Green	"	RED.
Yellow green	"	red purple.
YELLOW	"	purple.
Yellow orange	"	blue purple.

Thus in the decoration of a cornice, the general tone of color having been decided upon, reference to this table will at once supply the contrasting colors for the various members, and attention to this rule will pre-



DECORATED CHIMNEY-PIECE IN NAPOLEON'S PRIVATE APARTMENT AT THE TUILERIES.
DESIGNED BY PERCIER.

ing a grand approach to it, and a small antechamber, or painting-room, as it is called, immediately adjoining its chief entrance, adds apparent size by contrast. The studio itself is 58 feet by 25 feet, and has a gallery at the east end for statuary and hangings. A model's stair is conveniently arranged at this same end, having an entrance-door at the side of the house. Under the gallery Sir Frederick's colors and materials are carefully arranged in a cabinet, with endless compartments and pigeon-holes. A raised dais below the great north window occupies the central recess on that side of the studio, and at the west end an apsidal recess continues the arrangement of the semicircular bay of the drawing-room below. The general coloring of the walls in the studio is Indian red, the woodwork here, as in the rest of the house, being black and gold. The three chim-